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UNITED STATES NATIONAL INTERESTS IN  
THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

BY

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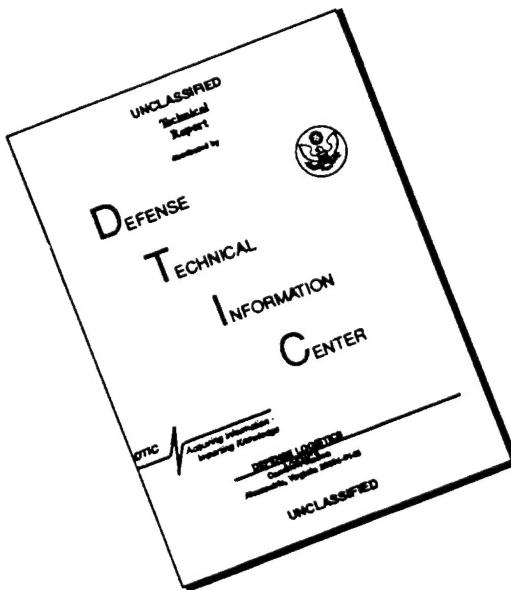
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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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## **ABSTRACT**

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A major paradigm shift has occurred in Southeast Asia. Once known as a center of instability, conflict and poverty, the countries of Southeast Asia are emerging into global prominence. Some of the most dramatic shifts occurring in Southeast Asia are in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Since the end of its involvement in the conflict in Indochina in 1975, the U.S. has predicated its relations with Vietnam almost entirely on accounting for more than 2,000 Americans still missing as a result of U.S. involvement there. If the U.S. is to retain its influence in Southeast Asia, it must now base its relations with Vietnam on realistic national interests rather than on an emotional issue on which significant progress has already been made. The U.S. has significant national interests in Vietnam to include: the security of U.S. allies, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the enhancement of regional stability, cooperation on counter-narcotics activities, access to markets and raw materials, security of sea lines of communication, promotion of free-market economies, success of emerging democracies, protection of U.S. citizens abroad, achievement of the fullest possible accounting for unaccounted-for Americans, and promotion of human rights. This paper analyzes each area and recommends policy positions to achieve/protect these interests.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

By helping to bring Vietnam into the community of nations, normalization also serves our interest in working for a free and peaceful Vietnam in a stable and peaceful Asia. . . . I believe normalization and increased contact between Americans and Vietnamese will advance the cause of freedom in Vietnam, just as it did in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. I strongly believe that engaging the Vietnamese on the broad front of economic reform and the broad front of democratic reform will help to honor the sacrifice of those who fought for freedom's sake in Vietnam.

—President William Clinton  
July 11, 1995<sup>1</sup>

A major paradigm shift is in progress in Southeast Asia, and many in the United States government (USG) have been slow to recognize it. Once known as a center of instability, conflict, and poverty, the countries of Southeast Asia are emerging into regional, and even global prominence. Some of the most dramatic shifts occurring in Southeast Asia are in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The legacy of bitterness from years of conflict between the United States and Vietnam has caused many policy makers in Washington to base foreign policy regarding Vietnam on the past rather than the future, on emotion rather than the reality of America's national interests. As the former Vietnamese Ambassador to the United Nations, His Excellency Le Van Bang said during a 1993 speech at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, "It is time for the United States to view Vietnam as a country, not a war, and to think of Tet as a holiday, not a battle."

"If the United States does not have a clear and abiding notion of its vital and other interests, it is likely to be disadvantaged with respect to nations which do."<sup>2</sup> Past U.S. policies toward Vietnam have placed it in a "disadvantaged position" relative to other nations regarding Vietnam. This gap will widen unless the U.S. continues to expand its engagement with Vietnam. Fully normalizing relations with Vietnam to include the entire range of diplomatic, economic, military, and information elements of power, is in the best interest of the U.S.

Closer ties will not constitute a parasitic relationship where only Vietnam reaps the benefits. Rather, it will be a symbiotic association which will serve the national interests of both countries. The purpose of this paper is to identify current and future U.S. national interests in Vietnam and recommend policies for achieving those interests. The framework Donald E. Nuechterlein developed for defining national interests in his book, America Recommitted—United States National Interests in a Restructured World, is the foundation for this analysis.

Ambassador Peter Tomsen, the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian/Pacific Affairs characterized the U.S.'s relationship with Vietnam as a "mobile hanging from the ceiling [that] involves many international and Vietnamese domestic balls. We need to balance them in a way that suits our interest the best."<sup>3</sup> The U.S. has a daunting task to keep the mobile in balance, but its successful engagement in the most rapidly growing region of the world depends on doing just that. Since the end of its involvement in the conflict in Vietnam in 1975, America has predicated its relations with Vietnam almost entirely on accounting for more than 2,000 Americans still missing as a result of U.S. involvement in the conflict there. U.S. preoccupations with this issue remain today, and achieving the fullest possible accounting will rightfully continue to be a matter of the highest national priority. Nevertheless, the U.S. has made significant tangible progress in accounting for its missing. More than twenty years have passed since the end of the war, and Vietnam has emerged as a responsible and peaceful member of the Asian community. The U.S. should now expand its engagement with Vietnam to many other issues critical to the national interests of both nations.

President Clinton defined three core objectives to his National Security Strategy: (1) enhancing U.S. security, (2) promoting prosperity at home, and (3) promoting democracy abroad.<sup>4</sup> Applying these three objectives to U.S. interests in Vietnam is impossible without considering the implications on the rest of Southeast and East Asia. This is especially so regarding the Peoples Republic of China and the member nations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).<sup>5</sup> "In the increasingly inter-dependent [sic] world, security of one country cannot be separated from the security of

the whole region and vice versa.”<sup>6</sup> When balancing U.S. interests in Asia with the strategic location of Vietnam, and its economic, diplomatic, and military potential, the U.S. clearly has significant and unavoidable interests in Vietnam. This paper examines U.S. interests in each of the President’s core objective areas and assigns an “intensity of interest” to each. (See Glossary for Nuechterlein’s definitions for the various intensities of interest; vital, major, peripheral.)



## **UNITED STATES NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

Using the general framework that Nuechterlein established for defining national interests and President Clinton's national security objectives, it is clear that the U.S. has no survival interests in its relationship with Vietnam. Vietnam does not pose "an imminent danger of attack" on the territories of the U.S. The U.S. does, however, have significant vital interests with Vietnam, but only as Vietnam relates to its regional neighbors. Finally, the U.S. has several major and peripheral interests to pursue with Vietnam, interests that leave significant room for compromise as the U.S. increases dialogue with Vietnam. (See Figure 1)

<b>Basic National Interest</b>	<b>Intensity of Interest</b>		
	<b>Vital (Dangerous)</b>	<b>Major (Serious)</b>	<b>Peripheral (Bothersome)</b>
<b>Enhancing U.S. Security (Defense of the Homeland)</b>	Security of U.S. Allies Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction	Regional Stability Counter-Narcotics	Protection of U.S. Citizens Abroad
<b>Prosperity at Home (Economic)</b>		Access to Markets & Raw Materials Security of Sea Lines of Communication	
<b>Promoting Democracy/Values Abroad (Ideological)</b>		Promotion of Free-Market Economies Success of Emerging Democracies	Achievement of the Fullest Possible Accounting for Unaccounted-For Americans Promotion of Human Rights

**Figure 1 - U.S. national interests in Vietnam**

None of the interests identified in Figure 1 stand alone. Achieving and protecting each interest depends on the U.S. successfully achieving and protecting other interests. Several examples of this interdependence are evident. The security of U.S. allies and

non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction closely interrelate with America's desire to maintain regional stability in Southeast Asia. Interests such as regional stability and security of sea lines of communication affect U.S. access to Vietnamese markets and raw materials. Promotion of human rights is an overarching interest for the U.S. as it engages any country, including Vietnam. Finally, the U.S. government has made continued Vietnamese cooperation on achieving the fullest possible accounting for Americans still missing in Vietnam as a precondition to continued engagement in all other areas. As the discussion of each national interest will illustrate, the overlap is significant and requires persistent engagement in many different areas simultaneously.

## **ENHANCING U.S. SECURITY**

When examining security interests the United States has with Vietnam, studying them in the context of regional security is critical. The U.S. walks a tightrope with its relations with Vietnam, other ASEAN countries, and other nations of East Asia. The key regional powers in East Asia are China and Japan; China because of its potential economic power and current military strength, and Japan because of its current economic power and potential military strength. As will be seen in the course of this discussion, U.S. relations with Vietnam impact U.S. relations with China and Japan significantly.

Clearly, China's influential shadow extends from East Asia throughout Southeast Asia. It is critical that the U.S. engage Vietnam and the other regional nations without creating the perception that it is trying to "contain" China. This will be especially delicate as the U.S. deepens its engagement with Vietnam.

Japan, on the other hand plays an increasingly important role in the economic development of the region and in regional security. "The fact that Japan has a substantial naval force, is in the process of modernizing its forces, and is by far the biggest spender on arms in the region, with a steady rise in its annual military budget, has many smaller Asia/Pacific countries concerned."<sup>7</sup> The key to other regional actors not seeing Japan as a potential threat is the continuation of the U.S.-Japan bilateral security relationship in the form of the Mutual Security Treaty.<sup>8</sup>

### **Security of U.S. Allies (Vital)**

Three of the U.S.'s six security commitments are with nations in Southeast Asia and Oceania; the Republic of the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia. "These bilateral commitments remain inviolable" despite the end of the Cold War.<sup>9</sup> As a potential regional power in the next century, Vietnam is a significant player in issues surrounding the security of the Philippines, Thailand and the other nations of Southeast Asia.

Two interrelated potential crises are brewing in East and Southeast Asia: the Spratly Islands dispute (the Spratly Island dispute will be discussed in depth later in this paper; page 11), and tensions between China and Taiwan. These two crises have striking similarities. First, both involve Chinese sovereignty claims. Second, China has agreed to resolve both issues diplomatically rather than through military force. Finally, both issues involve countries with whom the U.S. has some type of security agreement, though it is only with the Philippines that the U.S. has a formal treaty obligation to ensure its security.<sup>10</sup>

The U.S.'s response in March 1996 to Chinese efforts to intimidate Taiwan, a long standing U.S. ally, surely sent signals to the rest of Asia indicating possible U.S. resolve and future dependability in the region. Ambassador Winston Lord, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian-Pacific Affairs, recently stated:

Taiwan is an important economic actor throughout East Asia. It is located along one of the main sea lanes in the western Pacific. Any confrontation between the P.R.C. and Taiwan . . . would destabilize the military balance in East Asia and constrict the commerce and shipping which is the economic life-blood of the region. It would force other countries in the region to re-evaluate their own defense policies, possibly fueling an arms race with unforeseeable consequences.<sup>11</sup>

Many of the same issues Ambassador Lord outlined regarding the PRC-Taiwan tensions in the quotation above apply equally to the tensions in the Spratly Islands; destabilization of the military balance, constricting commerce and shipping, and fueling an arms race. For these reasons, it is very important that the U.S. continue to stress diplomatic solutions to the Spratly dispute. The nations of ASEAN overall, and Vietnam

and the Philippines in particular, certainly watched the U.S. response to Chinese “saber rattling.” They will likely use America’s response to the PRC-Taiwan tensions as a measure of how America might respond to similar Chinese actions in the South China Sea. It is still too early to determine if the U.S. response inspired confidence or increased doubts about U.S. determination to assure the security of its allies and preserve regional stability.

In the Spratlys, the Philippines contend that its Mutual Defense Treaty with the U.S. clearly covers Chinese incursions on the islands it claims there. The U.S., on the other hand, disputes Philippine interpretation of the treaty stating that it only encompasses external threats against the “metropolitan” areas of the Philippines.<sup>12</sup> Regardless of whose interpretation is correct, America’s commitments to its allies, and Southeast Asian perceptions of U.S. resolve in the region are clearly at risk if the Spratly Island dispute erupts into more serious military engagements.

The security of U.S. allies in Southeast Asia also affects the security of U.S. allies in other parts of the world. More than 25% of the world’s ocean freight and more than 70% of Japanese crude oil imports transit the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea.<sup>13</sup> Southeast Asia has also served as a key staging point for U.S. military forces responding to military crises throughout the world (e.g., the Gulf War). Since the end of the Cold War, however, regional governments have preferred an “over the horizon” regional presence of U.S. forces. The Philippines did not renew U.S. leases at Subic Bay or Clark Air Force Base. Political pressure is mounting in Japan to reduce the level of, if not remove entirely, U.S. military forces in Okinawa. And, in November 1994, Thailand refused the U.S. “request to station six supply ships off its coast.”<sup>14</sup> Vietnam, however, has not closed the door entirely to the possibility of such arrangements, though it is very unlikely in the immediate future due to its implications on U.S./China and Vietnam/China relations.<sup>15</sup>

### **Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (Vital)**

DOD's security strategy for the East Asia-Pacific region states that among the U.S.'s "most important criteria for judging the nature of . . . bilateral relations" with nations in the region is their level of cooperation with U.S. non-proliferation efforts.<sup>16</sup> In this vein, Vietnam has cooperated fully. It has been a signatory to "a series of multilateral disarmament treaties, among them the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1982."<sup>17</sup> Vietnam also fully supported the U.S. effort to conclude the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the indefinite extension of the Non-proliferation Treaty in 1995.

On December 15, 1995, ASEAN declared its territories as a nuclear-weapon-free zone (Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone - SEANWFZ). Before its membership in ASEAN in July 1995, Vietnam had already expressed its full support for the pending declaration. The U.S. has dropped its initial opposition to this declaration, but it remains troubled about the possibility of it restricting the movement of its nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed ships in the region. Likewise, China is concerned as "the treaty covers areas where China's claim to sovereignty overlaps with those of four ASEAN members [i.e., the Spratly Islands]."<sup>18</sup>

It is too early to know the impact of this treaty on either the U.S. or Chinese military presence in the South China Sea. The U.S. must, however, remain engaged with ASEAN regarding implementation and enforcement of the SEANWFZ declaration. Other regional powers such as Japan and New Zealand have restrictions similar to those in SEANWFZ, but enforce them differently. The U.S. has operated effectively within the framework of Japanese enforcement of their restrictions. The U.S. does not declare or deny the presence of nuclear weapons on its naval vessels, and Japan assumes U.S. compliance with their non-nuclear restrictions since the U.S. does not declare the presence of nuclear weapons. Disagreement on enforcement measures between the U.S. and New Zealand, on the other hand, led to a large rift in relations during the mid-1980's that is only now beginning to mend.

The SEANWFZ agreement is largely symbolic, since none of the signatories have a near-term potential for developing or possessing nuclear weapons. Several nations,

including Vietnam, however, are pursuing avenues to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As it continues to develop economically, Vietnam's energy requirements are certain to grow. Vietnam's leadership sees nuclear energy as a means to "keep up with the nation's growing energy demands."<sup>19</sup> Vietnam has had a single experimental reactor and has successfully undergone approximately fifty routine inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) without incident.<sup>20</sup> Vietnam has expressed a desire for "further assistance and cooperation of the IAEA" as they pursue the possibility of using nuclear energy to fulfill their growing energy demands.<sup>21</sup> It is in the U.S. interest to assure continued IAEA assistance and cooperation. This will help safeguard against Vietnam ever developing nuclear weapons or weapons grade materials.

### **Regional Stability (Major)**

As stated earlier, the security of U.S. allies in Southeast Asia and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the region contribute to regional stability. Conversely, regional stability enhances the security of individual nations of Southeast Asia, to include U.S. allies. Regional stability also reduces the temptation of regional powers to develop WMD to assure their security. The U.S. must accomplish several tasks to ensure regional stability: (1) prevent the emergence of a regional hegemon, (2) encourage diplomatic rather than military resolution of the Spratly Island dispute, (3) and slow/manage the growth of regional military forces.

### **Prevent Emergence of a Regional Hegemon**

The end of the Cold War left a power vacuum in Asia. Some have called it a security vacuum. Regardless of the terminology, who fills the vacuum is of great concern to Asians overall and Vietnam in particular. The new balance will include, at a minimum, the U.S., Japan, and China, and possibly Russia and India. Commenting on the newly emerging balance in East and Southeast Asia, His Excellency Ngo Quang Xuan, Vietnam's Ambassador to the United Nations, stated that "ideally" each Asian nation should be left to its own devices to handle its own interests without foreign intervention.

He also added, however, that the current “reality” is that U.S. presence in Southeast Asia is desirable to help preclude the rise of a regional hegemon.<sup>22</sup>

China is the regional actor with the greatest potential to emerge as a regional hegemon in the next century. Discussing the stability of Asia without discussing China is impossible. “Where China goes, so too goes the future of Asia. . . . China is the key factor to regional stability.”<sup>23</sup> China’s security establishment remains a mystery to most outside observers. Most agree, however, that early in the next century, China will likely have “both the largest population and the largest economy in the world.”<sup>24</sup> The concomitant expansion of China’s military capabilities is undeniable, but its intentions continue to be unclear. Intentions, however, normally coincide with a nation’s capabilities.

The President has chosen a policy of engaging rather than containing China. The U.S. must, however, engage China while still curbing its growing ability to force its will on its neighbors either militarily or economically. “Although our [U.S./Vietnam] normalization was not directed against any other country, . . . the fact is . . . it does strengthen our [U.S.] geopolitical position in Asia.”<sup>25</sup> The U.S. and its Asian partners must develop new means of influencing China’s behavior. One such means is to “support the development of vibrant, dynamic, and democratic countries on China’s borders. . . . The economic development of Vietnam can serve U.S. interests regarding China. U.S. support for most of China’s neighbors will also enhance their willingness to resist Chinese initiatives they find unpalatable and contribute to their security.”<sup>26</sup>

Just as China’s intentions remain unclear, so do those of the U.S. Most Southeast Asian nations, to include Vietnam, view the U.S. as a benign power without hegemonic ambitions in the region. Nevertheless, declining U.S. defense budgets and increasing isolationist rhetoric from some American politicians have created doubt about America’s resolve to intervene when necessary into Asian affairs. The murkiness of U.S. commitment has resulted in a reticence by regional powers to depend on the U.S. for their security.

Today, the nations of Southeast Asia lack a common near-term threat to their security. Most agree, however, that China looms in the future with hegemonic ambitions

and other regional powers are seeking measures to balance China's possible ambitions. "Balancing behaviour [sic] is the typical response to hegemonic aspirations: when a threatening power arises, other states tend to join together against it, forming a coalition whose total military strength may exceed that of the threatening state."<sup>27</sup> Possibly responding to the perception of Chinese regional ambitions and uncertainty regarding U.S. resolve, Southeast Asian countries are pursuing other means of balancing power and assuring regional stability. Recently, the nations of Southeast Asia added security dialogue to the primarily economic role of ASEAN by creating the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).<sup>28</sup> The ARF is "the first multilateral forum for consultations on Asia-Pacific security issues at the government level."<sup>29</sup> Some believe this was part of Vietnam's motivation for joining ASEAN and one of ASEAN's purposes for admitting them. "Though they will disavow it, the nations of Southeast Asia are including . . . Vietnam in their grouping (ASEAN) largely in order to balance China and Japan. And that too is why ASEAN is asking the United States to remain engaged in their region."<sup>30</sup>

The U.S. must remain active multilaterally with the ASEAN Regional Forum and continue to nurture its bilateral relationships throughout the region to reassure all of its determination to remain engaged. In the near term, regardless of its intentions, America will signal the strength of its resolve to preclude the emergence of a regional hegemon and reassure its commitment to maintain regional stability through its policies toward resolving regional disputes such as those in the Spratly Islands.

### **Spratly Island Dispute**

The issue of greatest immediate security concern to Southeast Asian observers is the Spratly Island dispute. The Spratly Islands are thought to contain large oil and gas deposits and are of "strategic significance for sea-lane defence [sic], interdiction and surveillance."<sup>31</sup> Vietnam, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei have all claimed part or all of the island group, and all except Brunei have military forces stationed on one or more of the islands. Only the conflicting claims between China and Vietnam, and China and the Philippines have resulted in military engagements.<sup>32</sup> These engagements

have been very small scale and brief, but threaten to become more widespread unless the claimants can resolve the issue diplomatically.

In ASEAN's Declaration on the South China Sea, the member nations encouraged all claimants to the Spratly Islands to resolve the issue peacefully. The recent introduction of Vietnam into ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum, of which the U.S. is a member, may make the regional implications of a Chinese military response to its territorial claims in the Spratlys against Vietnam more delicate for the U.S. and ASEAN. "Vietnam wants the United States to serve as a buffer, balancer and stabiliser [sic] in the South China Sea. In Vietnam's view ASEAN . . . opposition to Chinese expansion would be ineffective without tacit U.S. backing."<sup>33</sup>

The U.S. has encouraged claimants to discuss the issue multilaterally. It has not, however, voiced a firm position regarding its actions should one of the claimants resort to military force to resolve the issue other than to say it would view it "as a serious matter."<sup>34</sup> The ambiguity of this position is likely intentional on the part of the U.S. As in recent China-Taiwan tensions, regional stability hinges on the success of diplomatic initiatives regarding the Spratly Islands.

### **Slow/Manage Growth of Regional Military Forces**

As stated earlier, the end of the Cold War created a large degree of uncertainty for nations of Southeast Asia, including Vietnam. This is a primary cause of increased defense spending by East Asian powers, but uncertainty over great power regional involvement is not the only item spurring the growth. The ASEAN countries have experienced tremendous economic growth over the last decade. This has enabled them to increase their defense expenditures to a level they could not afford previously. Add to that the plethora of modern weapons available at bargain basement prices and it is easy to understand the moderate increases in defense spending.

Noting where the defense dollars are going is significant. The United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS) greatly expanded the offshore distance to which nations would want to defend by identifying Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) out to 200

miles. Under the UNCLOS, nations regulate all natural resources, including fish, oil and minerals within their EEZ. As a result, some ASEAN countries, especially the insular nations, are investing in modern naval vessels and aircraft capable of monitoring their EEZs. Even Vietnam has shown a significant increase in the size of its navy. This is probably in response to threats in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin (See Figure 5, Appendix A).

As depicted in Figure 2 of Appendix A, Chinese military strength dwarfs that of its southern neighbors. Despite its numbers, the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) is limited in terms of quality with outdated doctrine and equipment; it remains an ineffective force in comparison to the militaries of other developed countries. It is, however, a significant conventional military threat to the smaller and less modernized ASEAN countries. China currently lacks the power projection capability to pursue sustained military operations with nations such as the Philippines, Malaysia, etc., but its potential is growing. Recent Chinese purchases of IL-76 medium- to long-range transportation aircraft and Russian-built Kilo-class submarines, the organization of quickly deployable rapid reaction forces (one of which is stationed in Southeast China), the development of indigenously built naval vessels, and the reported interest in purchasing an aircraft carrier have raised concerns regarding Chinese intentions.<sup>35</sup>

The collapse of the Soviet Union brought a halt to financial support for Vietnam and the Peoples Army of Vietnam (PAVN). Vietnam has not shared in the revitalization of other Southeast Asian economies. As such, the leaders of Vietnam have consciously decided that before they can undertake to modernize their military, they must first revitalize their economy and establish a viable infrastructure for the nation. As depicted in Figures 4 through 7, Vietnam's military personnel strength and defense expenditures have dropped considerably, but that is not the whole story. Its equipment is often obsolete and little money is available in Vietnam's budget to modernize. Vietnam bloodied the noses of the Chinese invaders severely during the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese Conflict, but the decline in their military capabilities since the end of the Cold War makes a repeat of that unlikely.

### **Counter-Narcotics Cooperation (Major)**

Southeast Asia is the largest source of heroin entering the United States.<sup>36</sup> Though Vietnam is not a major producer of narcotics, it is a likely transit point for narcotics from the Golden Triangle to the West. Following a visit to Vietnam in June 1995, Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Robert Gelbard stated:

What was previously treated . . . as a Burma and Thailand problem has now evolved into an issue that threatens all the countries in the region. Trafficking routes have spread like a cancer to all these countries. . . As law enforcement efforts improved in Thailand, neighboring states of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia have all experienced an alarming growth in drug trafficking, and are seriously concerned about the domestic abuse problems that inevitably follow.<sup>37</sup>

Vietnam is “seriously concerned about narcotics abuse.”<sup>38</sup> The Department of State certified Vietnam as cooperating fully with the U.S. in counter-drug efforts in both its 1995 and 1996 “International Narcotics Control Strategy Reports.” On December 19, 1995, Vietnam adopted a Counter-Narcotics Master Plan, that included programs for “crop eradication, education, and the prevention and treatment of addiction.”<sup>39</sup> Although Vietnam has not signed the 1988 United Nations Convention on Drugs, it has agreed to sign it once it has drafted “appropriate national legislation” regarding narcotics. It also signed in May 1995, a Memorandum of Understanding on Sub-regional Cooperation on Drug Control with Cambodia, China, Laos, Burma, Thailand and the United Nations International Drug Programme.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, Vietnam has cooperated with the U.S. in its attempts to stem the flow of opium from Southeast Asia, and either has already or will this year participate in training programs with the U.S. Customs Department, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Even before the first official U.S.-Vietnam cooperative efforts and the visit to Vietnam of Assistant Secretary of State Gelbard, Vietnam had been cooperating with the DEA regarding counter-narcotics issues through INTERPOL.<sup>41</sup>

### **Protection of U.S. Citizens Abroad (Peripheral)**

American businesses have opened more than 300 representative offices in Vietnam, and more are arriving each week. With hundreds of millions of dollars invested in Vietnam, U.S. corporations have a large stake in the success of Vietnam's economic reforms and the warming of relations between the U.S. and Vietnam. Vietnam, however, continues to be a very difficult nation in which to do business. It still has "a highly protectionist and bureaucratic trade regime with import quotas and strict licensing of firms that are permitted to trade, . . . broad restrictions on the types of foreign investment allowed, . . . [and a] lack of effective dispute settlement procedures."<sup>42</sup> The establishment of a trade agreement between Vietnam and the U.S. is critical to resolving many of these difficulties for American businesses.

Additionally, as Vietnam continues its policy of openness, ever more Americans are traveling to Vietnam. Many of these are Vietnamese-Americans, who by Vietnamese law are Vietnamese citizens. The Vietnamese government has imprisoned several Vietnamese-Americans for their political activities while in Vietnam, and has denied consular officials access to them because they considered the jailed Americans to be Vietnamese citizens. The opening of the United States Liaison Office in Hanoi in January 1995 brought an agreement for consular access to imprisoned Americans in Vietnam. This agreement included access to Vietnamese-Americans by granting U.S. consular officials access to all imprisoned U.S. passport holders, thus sidestepping the issue of citizenship.

The U.S. has an obligation to protect its citizens and their investments throughout the world. Current dialogue has begun to improve the USG's ability to protect its citizenry and their investments. Closer relations will reinforce this trend and create more favorable conditions for U.S. businesses to operate in Vietnam. As such, protecting U.S. citizens in Vietnam has direct linkage with President Clinton's second core objective, promoting prosperity at home.

## PROMOTING PROSPERITY AT HOME

More than 50% of U.S. trade occurs with its Pacific partners. ASEAN, of which Vietnam is now a full member, accounts for nearly 20% of the world's exports, and is America's fourth largest trading partner. For the U.S., "two-way trade with ASEAN countries is growing by nearly 20 percent a year. . . . Vietnam falls squarely in a region of the world that is essential to our overall economic prosperity and a cornerstone of our trade policy."<sup>43</sup> Regarding the future of U.S./Vietnam relations, Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam stated, "Economic relations will be the cornerstone on which to build the castle of a comprehensive, long-term cooperation in the future."<sup>44</sup>

Though still a very poor developing country, Vietnam's future economic prospects are good. Vietnam possesses one of the world's fastest economic growth rates. Since 1989, Vietnam's economy has grown 7-8% annually, and its exports have increased by 30% annually. The Vietnamese government reduced inflation from almost 400% in 1988 to approximately 10% in 1994.<sup>45</sup> During that same period, Vietnam moved from chronic food shortages as an importer of foodstuffs, to the world's third leading exporter of rice behind the U.S. and Thailand. Should current moderate policies for continued economic reform continue, Vietnam can expect inflation to remain at 8-9% annually and to post growth of its real Gross Domestic Product at "a solid 8% annually through 2000. The level of domestic economic problems will decline as a result of increased oil production, foreign aid and investment, and the implementation of economic reforms."<sup>46</sup>

Internationally, Vietnam is making significant inroads toward integrating itself into the global economy. Vietnam became an observer to the representative council of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in July 1994, and has applied for membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO). During the summer of 1995, three major events occurred regarding Vietnam's international economic aspirations:

- (1) Vietnam joined ASEAN, (2) Vietnam signed an agreement on cooperation with the European Union (the Framework Agreement on Economic and Trade Cooperation), and (3) the U.S. normalized diplomatic relations with Vietnam.

U.S. business interests have invested “more than \$600 million in Vietnam, making the U.S. the country’s eighth largest foreign investor.”<sup>47</sup> Of great interest to the U.S., Vietnam has also entered into and adhered to several agreements concerning international protection of intellectual property.<sup>48</sup> Regionally, Vietnam is a member of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Committee (PECC) and has applied for membership in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). Closer bilateral relations with Vietnam, will therefore strengthen the U.S. position in these multilateral fora.

There are three elements to the U.S.’s economic strategy with Vietnam and three elements to full normalization of trade between the U.S. and Vietnam. Achieving full trade normalization is contingent upon the success of the U.S. economic strategy. The elements of the U.S. strategy are: (1) to develop and sign a comprehensive bilateral trade agreement, (2) to promote U.S. exports to Vietnam, and (3) to expand programs to support U.S. business interests in Vietnam.<sup>49</sup> The elements to full normalization of trade are: (1) most favored nation (MFN) status, (2) WTO membership, and (3) eligibility for the Generalized System of Preferences.<sup>50</sup>

The most important step in the U.S. economic strategy is to conclude a comprehensive trade agreement. Conclusion of such an agreement and the steps Vietnam must take to do so, will have a cascading effect on the remaining elements of trade with the U.S. and the world. It will accelerate “Vietnam’s integration into the world market, . . . pave the way for its full participation in ASEAN’s economic success,” and speed Vietnam’s accession into the WTO.<sup>51</sup>

#### **Access to Markets & Raw Materials (Major)**

Vietnam’s market includes more than seventy-four million consumers. Its population is the twelfth largest in the world. Vietnam’s major trade partners include Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and China. U.S. companies are just beginning to establish themselves in Vietnam, “working in the fields of banking, oil and gas exploration, construction, automobile, equipment and machinery manufacture, electrical and electronic production, and transportation.”<sup>52</sup>

American "know how" in infrastructure development is internationally renowned, and infrastructure development is precisely what Vietnam needs most. By some estimates, Vietnam will award as much as \$20 billion in infrastructure contracts.<sup>53</sup> When full economic normalization between the U.S. and Vietnam occurs, U.S. corporations will hold the competitive edge over other international bidders for such projects as highway construction/repair, airport and seaport construction, telecommunications system development, etc. "U.S. firms are world leaders in infrastructure systems and have the expertise, technology and access to financial markets to be major players in helping Vietnam meet its huge infrastructure needs."<sup>54</sup>

Vietnam is rich in natural resources such as phosphates, coal, manganese, bauxite, chromate, offshore oil deposits, forests, rubber, marine products. "Many industry analysts contend that Vietnam's infant petroleum industry could make it a major oil exporter by the turn of the Century. Some estimates claim that Vietnam could possess the world's fourth largest oil reserve, while others have estimated a range between 1.5 and 3.0 billion barrels."<sup>55</sup> Continued and enhanced access to Vietnam's market and resources is an important aspect of U.S./Vietnam relations. The U.S. Department of Commerce "designated Vietnam as part of its ASEAN Big Emerging Market" in August 1995. That designation will help promote U.S. exports to Vietnam.<sup>56</sup> Currently, Vietnam imports from the U.S. total \$172 million, and exports to the U.S. amount to \$50 million.<sup>57</sup>

As stated earlier, the most important step toward normalization of economic relations with Vietnam is the conclusion of a comprehensive trade agreement. There are, however, other intermediate steps the U.S. can take to enhance U.S. business opportunities in Vietnam.<sup>58</sup> "U.S. financing and insurance programs such as OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation], Ex-Im Bank [Export-Import Bank], TDA [Trade and Development Agency], and CCC [Commodity Credit Corporation] play key roles in helping U.S. firms compete with their foreign rivals . . ."<sup>59</sup> Currently, lack of access to these programs for U.S. businesses wishing to establish themselves in Vietnam or already operating there, limit the competitiveness of their bids, despite their experience. Granting Vietnam access to the programs, however, depends on progress in Vietnam's

emigration and human rights policies, or on the President waiving the restrictions implicit with each program.

An additional obstacle to increased U.S./Vietnam trade is that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is indebted to the U.S. for loans the Republic of Vietnam incurred during the U.S. involvement in the conflict in Indochina. The Brooke Amendment, therefore, prohibits the U.S. from providing Vietnam Foreign Operations Appropriations Act funding. The U.S. and Vietnam have begun negotiations to reschedule this debt.

The U.S. is increasing its economic engagement with Pacific powers by participating in and showing leadership in regional economic fora. “We are seeking to develop the principal multilateral forum, APEC<sup>60</sup>, and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC)<sup>61</sup> to promote free trade, investment and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.”<sup>62</sup> If, as many expect, APEC accepts Vietnam’s application for membership in 1997, APEC will be yet another multilateral forum where closer bilateral U.S.-Vietnam relations could benefit the U.S.

In 1993 ASEAN created the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). AFTA’s goal is to reduce tariffs between member countries by 5% by 2003 and remove all tariffs on manufactured products by 2010. It could, however, have the effect of “regionalizing” trade, and excluding non-regional powers. Nonmember nations such as the U.S. could “find it increasingly difficult to gain access to [the] markets.”<sup>63</sup> It is in the U.S. national interest to remain a full partner with ASEAN to ensure access to this critical market.

#### **Security of Sea Lines of Communication (Major)**

America’s “ability to protect the vital sea lines in the Pacific and Indian Oceans enhances regional prosperity.”<sup>64</sup> The U.S. economy, and the economies of several of America’s key allies throughout the world depend on freedom of navigation through the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea. As stated earlier, more than 70% of Japan’s oil and gas transit these two areas, and more than 25% of the world’s ocean freight transits the South China Sea. The U.S. has “a very strong interest in navigational rights . . . when you think, for example, how much oil just passes through that area (the South China Sea),

not to mention the oil that may be in that area.”<sup>65</sup> As discussed earlier, the territorial disputes festering in the South China Sea could threaten the safe passage of ships through the region. The U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region emphasizes that “our strategic interest in maintaining the lines of communication linking Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and the Indian Ocean make it essential that we resist any maritime claims beyond those permitted by the Law of the Sea Convention.”<sup>66</sup> Therefore, the U.S. fully supports the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes such as those in the Spratly Islands.

Another issue of great concern to the security of the sea lines of communication is that of piracy. There has been a recent increase in the incidence of piracy in Southeast Asian waters.<sup>67</sup> This threat runs the gamut from attacks on small refugee boats to large oil tankers. The threat to larger vessels is especially worrisome for the governments of the region, not only for economic reasons, but also out of environmental concerns.<sup>68</sup> Pirates have been known to confine the crews while they strip the ship of its navigational and communications equipment. Once finished, they set it adrift without the benefits of its equipment. An accident involving one of these ships, especially an oil tanker, could have a catastrophic environmental effect in the region and on the world’s maritime resources.

Merchant ships experience unique difficulties in Southeast Asia since regional government patrol boat crews sometimes turn to piracy themselves for short periods. There have been several cases where such patrol boats approach a vessel and demand permission to board. The target vessel that refuses permission to board out of concern about the boarders’ purposes risks incurring fines. However, by acquiescing to the boarding, they risk becoming the victims of piracy. Chinese government patrol boats have been involved in several such instances.

Nations have the right and responsibility to suppress piracy on the high seas and to protect their national flag shipping on the high seas. However, unless prior arrangements are made, navies and other law enforcement forces do not have the right to enter another nation’s territorial waters. In narrow, busy waterways such as the Malacca Straits, only limited areas are outside territorial waters.<sup>69</sup>

Where countries have made such prior arrangements (e.g., Singapore and Malaysia) the incidence of piracy has seen a significant reduction. Also, where national navies and law enforcement agencies are strong, piracy is not a significant problem.

In the Gulf of Tonkin, off the coast of northern Vietnam and the southern portion of China, the threat is serious. The Vietnamese navy is small and antiquated and ineffectual against piracy in the region. China, as stated earlier, does not seem able to control its own naval forces to preclude them from becoming part of the problem, rather than the solution. Many of the ASEAN nations have increased spending for their maritime forces and this should help their anti-piracy campaigns, but Vietnam's navy remains largely obsolete and ineffectual against piracy. Regionally, the problem is unlikely to abate, until more regional powers conclude agreements allowing anti-piracy operations to cross into territorial waters.

## PROMOTING DEMOCRACY/VALUES ABROAD

### Promotion of Free-Market Economies (Major)

It is clear that Vietnam has successfully begun to transition from a centrally controlled economy to a free market one, but it still has a long way to go. As Secretary Christopher said recently, there are many different models of what a free-market economy can look like, but all that are successful share several characteristics. They include: "private property rights, [protection by] an independent judiciary, . . . ownership clearly defined by law, . . . one can borrow capital, buy insurance, and freely exchange information. In each, efficiency, hard work, and imagination are rewarded, not discouraged."<sup>70</sup>

In February 1996, The World Bank issued a report praising Vietnam for its progress, but cautioned against declaring total success of the *do moi*<sup>71</sup> reforms.

Vietnam has recorded impressive results since the introduction of a comprehensive program of adjustment and reform in 1989; growth has been strong, inflation has been brought under control, and progress has been made in the transition to a market economy . . . [but] complacency would be misplaced, as Vietnam is only at the beginning of its road to

sustaining high labor-intensive and broad-based growth in order to eliminate poverty. . . . Current trends in industrialization are not fully consistent with this vision: state enterprises have in fact increased their share in industrial output and private businesses, though growing steadily, have lagged behind.<sup>72</sup>

The U.S. national security strategy states, "Democracies create free markets that offer economic opportunity, make for more reliable trading partners, and are far less likely to wage war on one another."<sup>73</sup> History has also shown us, however, that the converse is also true; that free markets lead to democratic reform. Democratic traditions have only recently blossomed in countries such as South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, despite their free market economies. Many of the former Soviet Republics that embraced democratic forms of government before developing a strong free market economy, on the other hand, are experiencing severe internal difficulties.

The Vietnamese have observed this phenomenon and the Tiennamen Square massacre in China with great interest. Vietnam appears determined to chart its own course toward free market reform and democratization. It is unlikely that Vietnam will reduce its governmental controls as quickly as what occurred in the former Soviet Union. The challenge for Vietnam is to continue economic reform in a stable and peaceful environment. This economic reform will likely lead to democratic reform, albeit not as quickly as many in the U.S. may want.

### **Success of Emerging Democracies (Major)**

Promoting democracies is one of President Clinton's three core national objectives. The newest and probably the most fragile democracy in Asia is that of Cambodia. Vietnam shares an extensive land border with Cambodia, and will play a key role in the stability of Cambodia's fledgling democratic government. "It is . . . a fact that Cambodia's stability cannot be ensured without its neighboring countries restraining themselves."<sup>74</sup> Vietnam's Ambassador to the United Nations, H.E. Ngo Quang Xuan, views the possible resumption of the Cambodian civil war as the second greatest threat to regional stability behind the Spratly Islands dispute.<sup>75</sup>

Vietnam and Cambodia have a history of territorial disputes and claims by each that the other persecutes its citizens residing in the other's territory. During recent months, Cambodia has accused Vietnam of repositioning border markers and intruding on Cambodian territory. Likewise, Vietnam has charged that the Government of Cambodia has persecuted Vietnamese citizens. Today, both countries have promised to settle this dispute diplomatically. Another military dispute between Vietnam and Cambodia would exacerbate Cambodia's internal difficulties, and ultimately destabilize the region. Cambodia's imminent acceptance as a full member of ASEAN will provide even more impetus for the two governments to resolve their differences diplomatically.

#### **Achievement of the Fullest Possible Accounting (Peripheral)**

President Clinton identified the achievement of the fullest possible accounting of Americans still unaccounted-for as a result of U.S. involvement in the war in Indochina as an issue of the highest national priority. Achieving the fullest possible accounting does not fit neatly into the Nuechterlein model because it is an emotional and political issue, not one critical to U.S. national security, economic prosperity or promotion of democracy. Some might categorize its promotion as an integral part of "protection of U.S. citizens abroad," and that position might have had a sound basis twenty years ago. Today, however, this issue is purely political and could not withstand a rigorous examination using anyone's definition of national interests. Reality is, though, achieving the fullest possible accounting is the most important issue influencing relations between the U.S. and Vietnam.<sup>76</sup> The U.S. will not continue to engage Vietnam on the many other issues of interest without continued cooperation by the Vietnamese Government toward resolving the issue of missing Americans.

There are 2,154 Americans still unaccounted-for as a result of the U.S.'s involvement in the war in Indochina; 1,609 in Vietnam.<sup>77</sup> On July 2, 1993, President Clinton validated former President Bush's four areas requiring tangible evidence of progress as a precondition to normalizing relations: (1) repatriation and identification of remains, (2) access to documents, (3) trilateral cooperation, and (4) progress in resolving

priority cases and live sighting investigations, and support for joint field activities. The President has continued to stress these areas of concern even as the U.S. begins to engage Vietnam on other important issues.

On November 13, 1995, the Department of Defense published the results of its in-depth review of all remaining cases of Americans still missing in Indochina. The report defined cases requiring a significant amount of joint U.S.-Vietnam work and Vietnamese unilateral work and cooperation. Two other findings were especially relevant to the issue of increasing engagement with Vietnam: (1) no actions by any government will result in the recovery of 567 unaccounted-for individuals or 26% of the 2,154 Americans still missing in Indochina; and (2) "we [the Defense POW/MIA Office] have no evidence that information is being deliberately withheld [by the governments of Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia]."<sup>78</sup>

Vietnam is cooperating fully on resolving this very emotional issue.<sup>79</sup> They have made significant headway in each of the four areas outlined by President Clinton as requiring progress. Could the Vietnamese do more to cooperate? They probably could if they devoted more personnel and money to resolving the issue, however, Vietnam remains a very poor country. It is already devoting more toward resolving the issue of missing Americans in Vietnam than it is to resolving the fate of more than 300,000 Vietnamese still missing as a result of their "War for Independence." Given the difficulties they face as they try to rebuild their country, they are providing a level of cooperation far exceeding what might be reasonable for the U.S. to expect of them. They have pledged to continue their current level of cooperation indefinitely.

In a statement to a conference sponsored by the U.S.-Vietnam Forum, the educational affiliate of the U.S. - Vietnam Trade Council, Senator Bennett Johnston (Democrat - Louisiana) stated, "The Vietnamese have done everything proper and beyond what I think we had a right to expect in this country [the U.S.]. And it is simply not an issue and should not be an irritant at all in relationship between the United States and Vietnam."<sup>80</sup>

### **Promotion of Human Rights (Peripheral)**

The United States links human rights to its international economic intercourse and believes that a nation's human rights policies reinforce economic security. A key point of contention between Vietnam and the U.S. has been, and will likely continue to be, human rights, at least in the foreseeable future. Though the Vietnamese feel that human rights in Vietnam are an internal matter, the U.S. has been clear in asserting that "there are some universal principles that countries are obligated to follow," and that it ties relations with countries throughout the world, not just Vietnam, to those principles.<sup>81</sup> The U.S. insists that Vietnam comply with the tenets of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of which it is a signatory.<sup>82</sup>

The U.S. Department of State 1995 human rights report for Vietnam states, "The Government's human rights record continued to be poor, and it continues to repress basic political and some religious freedoms and to commit numerous abuses."<sup>83</sup> It did, however, also report that there was some, though limited, progress in establishing a legal infrastructure and a means to "deal with complaints about abuse and corruption by state officials." The report noted a "trend toward reduced government interference in people's daily lives continued as did the trend toward greater freedom to engage in economic activity. People were allowed slightly greater freedom of expression and assembly , but there were intermittent restrictions on the practice of religion."<sup>84</sup> It appears that the free-market reforms may slowly be bringing about democratic reform in Vietnam. This should encourage U.S. policy makers whose ultimate goal is to promote democracy and American values abroad.

Vietnam has also made some encouraging movement in its policy toward political prisoners. In November 1995 the Vietnamese released two Vietnamese-Americans they jailed for organizing a pro-democracy conference in Ho Chi Minh City in 1993. Then in February 1996, the Vietnamese Government released from prison noted pro-democracy activist Doan Thanh Liem. They had imprisoned Liem for five years for distributing "counter-revolutionary propaganda."

Human rights reform in Vietnam is an issue where the U.S. is unlikely to make significant gains quickly. Vietnam considers most human rights issues a matter of internal concern, not a matter of concern for other countries. The fact is, however, the U.S. ties its relations with other countries to internationally accepted standards of human rights. Vietnam must accept this as a precondition to better relations with the U.S. Likewise, the U.S. should accept, as it has in other parts of the world, that it does not have to be an "all or nothing" proposition. Improvement in human rights issues should result in enhanced economic cooperation.



## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS**

Warming U.S./Vietnam relations, continued peaceful and responsible regional conduct by Vietnam, and increased integration into regional and global economic communities will have a direct impact on shared U.S.-Vietnam interests in the region. It is undeniable that the nations of Southeast Asia have accepted Vietnam as an important and responsible member of its community. The U.S. can further its national interests regionally by advancing its interests with Vietnam bilaterally. In the words of Ambassador Lord, Vietnam membership in ASEAN “increased the importance of having a strengthened bilateral dialogue and relationship with Hanoi so that as we deal with ASEAN in broader forums, we can do that more effectively multilaterally because we are more in touch with each other bilaterally.”<sup>85</sup>

The fullest possible accounting of Americans still missing in Vietnam remains a matter of the highest national priority. This must not change. However, the Vietnamese are cooperating fully with U.S. efforts to resolve this issue and the President should declare Vietnam’s full cooperation to the Congress. Though this declaration will not be politically popular with a relatively small but vocal constituency, the President will find this position strongly supportable. After all, the much anticipated firestorm of dissent after President Clinton lifted the trade embargo and subsequently normalized diplomatic relations never materialized. Expanded diplomatic, economic and military interaction between the U.S. and Vietnam will enhance, not detract from America’s full accounting efforts.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Regional Security**

“A security community in Southeast Asia cannot be realized without involving Vietnam.”<sup>86</sup> The U.S. must remain involved with security fora in Southeast Asia. Among issues the ASEAN Regional Forum members discuss are confidence-building measures,

military transparency, peacekeeping cooperation, nuclear non-proliferation, exchanges of unclassified military information, maritime security, and preventive diplomacy. "The ARF can play a constructive role in conveying intentions, easing suspicions, building confidence, and, ultimately, averting conflicts."<sup>87</sup> All are matters important to the U.S. and its regional partners.<sup>88</sup> It is critical that the U.S. remains a participant in regional security dialogue to ensure its interests are fully represented.

The U.S. must be exceedingly clear, as it was during recent China/Taiwan tensions, that military force is not a viable alternative to diplomacy to resolve territorial disputes in Southeast Asia. Of most immediate concern are Chinese intentions in the Spratly Islands. Current U.S. policy regarding the Spratlys is sufficient only as long as all parties negotiate in good faith. Although China has agreed to negotiate development of the Spratlys, it has not budged from its sovereignty claims over the chain. The U.S. must insist on multilateral negotiations such as the Indonesian Conference and discussions by the ARF, and remain an active participant in any negotiated settlement of claims. This is critical to assure international freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and Malacca Straits.

The U.S. must continue to promote military transparency among the regional powers to ease uncertainties about each other's intentions. Defense *White Papers* such as those Australia and Thailand published recently clarify security aspirations and intentions and could go far to preclude a regional arms race. Likewise, a "public registry containing information on regional arms acquisitions to complement the UN Arms Register of Conventional Arms" could ease regional uncertainty.<sup>89</sup>

The U.S. should expand its military-to-military contacts with Vietnam. It must do this very carefully so as not to be perceived as attempting to contain China. It can, however, do so in several non-threatening manners. In fact, several U.S./Vietnam military-to-military contacts are already in place. Since January 1992, Joint Task Force - Full Accounting has undertaken operations in Vietnam with the full cooperation of Vietnamese military authorities. Additionally, high level visits of U.S. military personnel, such as those of the Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Command, have become

relatively commonplace. Finally, since December 1995, the U.S. has had a defense attache posted as a part of the U.S. embassy in Hanoi.

The U.S. should immediately expand such interplay by including Vietnam in regional military conferences. Vietnam is already involved with the primary regional security forum, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and continuing this precedent into other conferences is only logical. In the near future, the U.S. should consider providing limited “non-lethal” forms of military education and training to the Vietnamese military. This training could include de-mining assistance such as the U.S. has undertaken in Cambodia, medical assistance team visits, and other “nation building” programs. Nations throughout the world have benefitted from observing the U.S. military’s civil-military interaction.

At some point in the future, envisioning port visits by U.S. Navy vessels at either Cam Ranh Bay or Hai Phong is reasonable. Such visits are consistent with PACOM’s strategy of “places, not bases,” and visibly enhance U.S. commitment to regional stability.<sup>90</sup> Although probably in the even more distant future, pre-positioning U.S. military equipment at one or both locations (most likely at Cam Ranh Bay) would enhance U.S. security interests both regionally, and in other regions of the world (e.g., Southwest Asia). Vietnam’s strategic proximity to key sea lines of a communication makes it an ideal location for such programs.

The level of Vietnam’s cooperation in counter-narcotics operations is a testament to the advantages of engaging Vietnam in all areas pertaining to U.S. national interests. The U.S. should continue this dialogue and the training programs currently underway. Today’s multilateral cooperation in counter-narcotics operations between Vietnam, the U.S., and other Southeast Asian nations, could serve as an excellent model for improving Vietnam’s and Southeast Asia’s capability to deter piracy. Training police and naval forces and sharing certain intelligence information are two ways of enhancing their capabilities to reverse the increasing incidence of piracy.

### **Promoting Prosperity**

Economically, the U.S.'s goal regarding Vietnam is to "develop . . . the same full range of economic relationships that we enjoy with [Vietnam's] Southeast Asian neighbors."<sup>91</sup> The U.S. government should, in a step-by-step manner, clear the obstacles to U.S. investment in Vietnam. The step-by-step process must hinge on continued cooperation in resolving the issue of unaccounted-for Americans, continued progress toward a free market, and improvement in its human rights record.

In acknowledgment of Vietnam's cooperation and progress to date, the U.S. should take several steps immediately.

1. The Secretary of State should declare Vietnam a "friendly" nation to allow U.S. Trade and Development Agency funding.
2. The President should waive the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik issue, citing that Vietnam meets many of the emigration requirements of Jackson-Vanik, and that waiving the others will promote the advancement of the overall objectives of Jackson-Vanik.<sup>92</sup>
3. The President should declare that "transactions with Vietnam are in the [U.S.] national interest."<sup>93</sup>

These actions would clear the way for granting Export-Import Bank access to U.S. firms, thereby making them more competitive when bidding for commercial contracts. The USG should grant this immediately. As a next step in economic normalization, the USG should grant Overseas Private Investment Corporation guarantees to U.S. businesses operating in Vietnam. Vietnam's progress in meeting the international labor standards on which OPIC depends will, in all likelihood, be slow, but the President can declare that "extending OPIC activity 'is in the national interest.'"

### **Promoting Democracy/Values**

Mr. Le Mai, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Vietnam said, ". . . the mentality of Americans and Vietnamese is different. You put iron and steel in, and a few hours later you have a car. Here, people plant rice, and they wait two or three months.

And if there's a typhoon, they have nothing.”<sup>94</sup> If the U.S. expects Vietnam's form of government or human rights practices to change overnight, it is certain to be disappointed. However, exposing “Vietnamese society to outside trade, investment, people, information, and ideas . . . should work to open up the political system of Vietnam.”<sup>95</sup> The Department of State's report, Vietnam Human Rights Practices, 1995 states, “ . . . economic reforms have raised the standard of living and reduced party and government control over people's daily lives.”<sup>96</sup> The U.S. must ensure this trend continues.

The democratic ideals the U.S. espouses are not foreign to Vietnamese culture. The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam states, “The SRV state is of the people, by the people, and for the people. All state power belongs to the people. . .” and assures for its people the goal of achieving “social justice for everyone to enjoy a life of plenty, freedom, and happiness.”<sup>97</sup> U.S. policies should be directed toward encouraging Vietnam to implement those ideals more in line with the common standards espoused in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of which they are a signatory.<sup>98</sup> The U.S. must continue its current human rights dialogue with Vietnam.

The U.S. can also further promote democratic ideals and U.S. values by encouraging the continued involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in the development of Vietnam. Today, almost 100 Vietnamese are studying in the U.S., half on Fulbright Scholarships and half sponsored by private foundations. Exposure to U.S. culture and people through these programs is one of America's most effective means of promoting its values internationally.

## CONCLUSIONS

The United States must have a “clear and abiding notion of its interests” in Vietnam. Otherwise, it will never have a completely integrated regional security policy. Although the U.S. cannot disregard the importance of resolving the issue of Americans

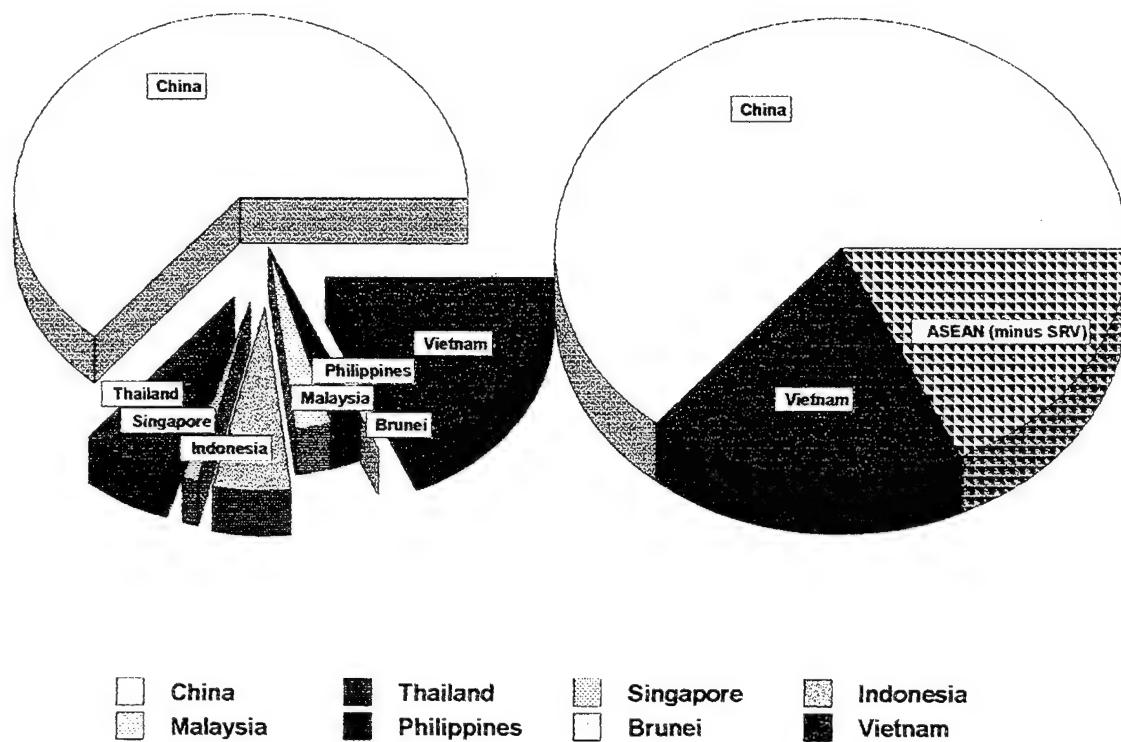
still unaccounted-for in Vietnam, it must assess its interests more realistically. As Secretary of Defense Perry stated,

The best way to prevent or deter conflict is for the U.S. to remain fully engaged in its leadership role by maintaining our forward presence, reinforcing alliances, developing bilateral and multilateral relationships and by developing dialogues that promote confidence- and security-building measures. . . Our cooperative efforts have helped keep the lid on regional conflicts, guaranteed freedom of the seas, reduced the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and promoted democracy, respect for human rights, and free markets.<sup>99</sup>

Secretary Perry's remarks ring true for our relations with Vietnam. Further developing bilateral ties with Vietnam will enable the U.S. to deal multilaterally with other nations of Southeast Asia more effectively on a full range of issues. During a visit to Hanoi in early 1995, Congressman Bill Richardson (Democrat-New Mexico), a trusted advisor to President Clinton, addressed a meeting of the American business community in Hanoi. The businesspeople, of course, advocated that the U.S. should normalize diplomatic relations with Vietnam. Responding to their overtures, Congressman Richardson agreed that they had presented sound geo-strategic, economic and humanitarian arguments for normalizing relations with Vietnam. They had not, however, presented adequate "political reasons" for normalization; i.e., normalizing relations with Vietnam had serious political implications for the President, and the businesspeople had not cited sufficient "political cover" for the President.

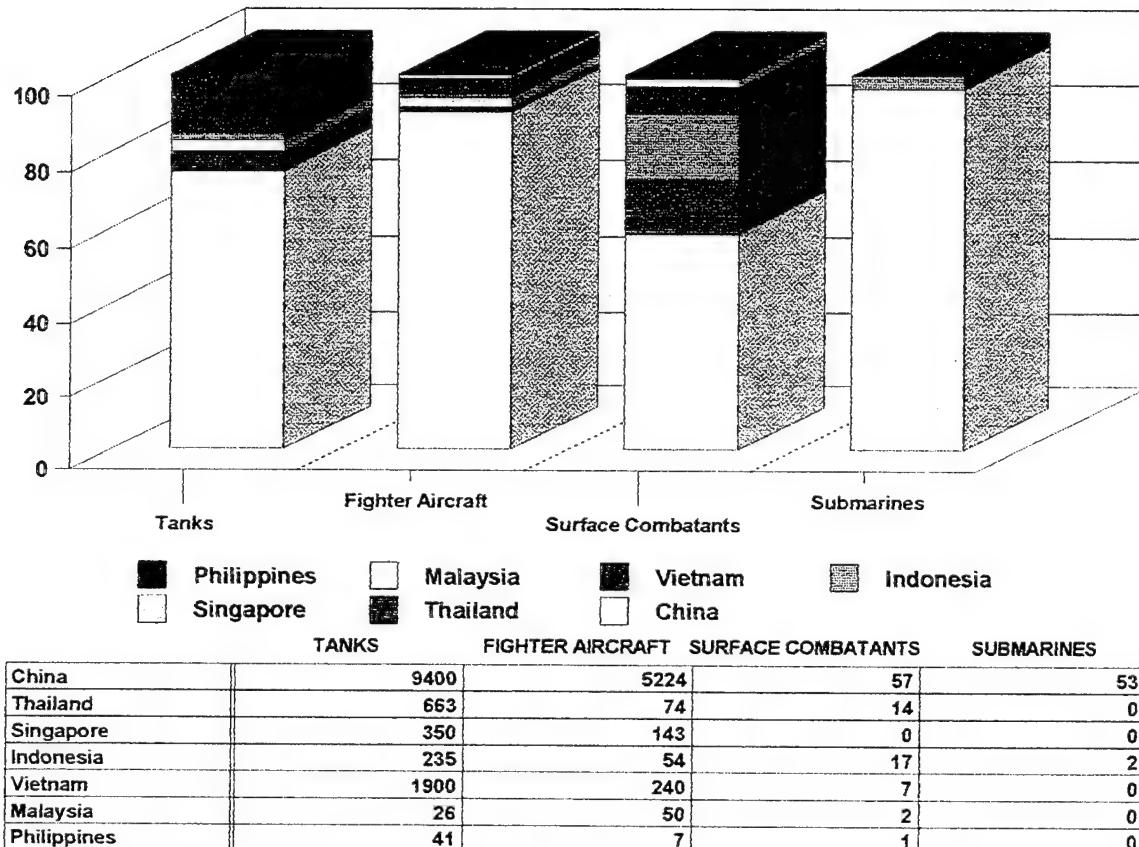
President Clinton has shown great "political" courage and leadership in his policies toward Vietnam. By first lifting the trade embargo in February 1994, and then normalizing diplomatic relations in July 1995, President Clinton has embarked the U.S. on a more realistic appraisal of its national interests in Vietnam and the Southeast Asian region. The U.S. must continue on this path toward fully normalizing its relations with Vietnam; diplomatically, economically, and militarily. Only by basing its policies toward Vietnam on concrete U.S. national interests, can the United States achieve its regional goals more effectively and become an even more influential factor in the future direction of Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

## Appendix A - Southeast Asia Military Statistics



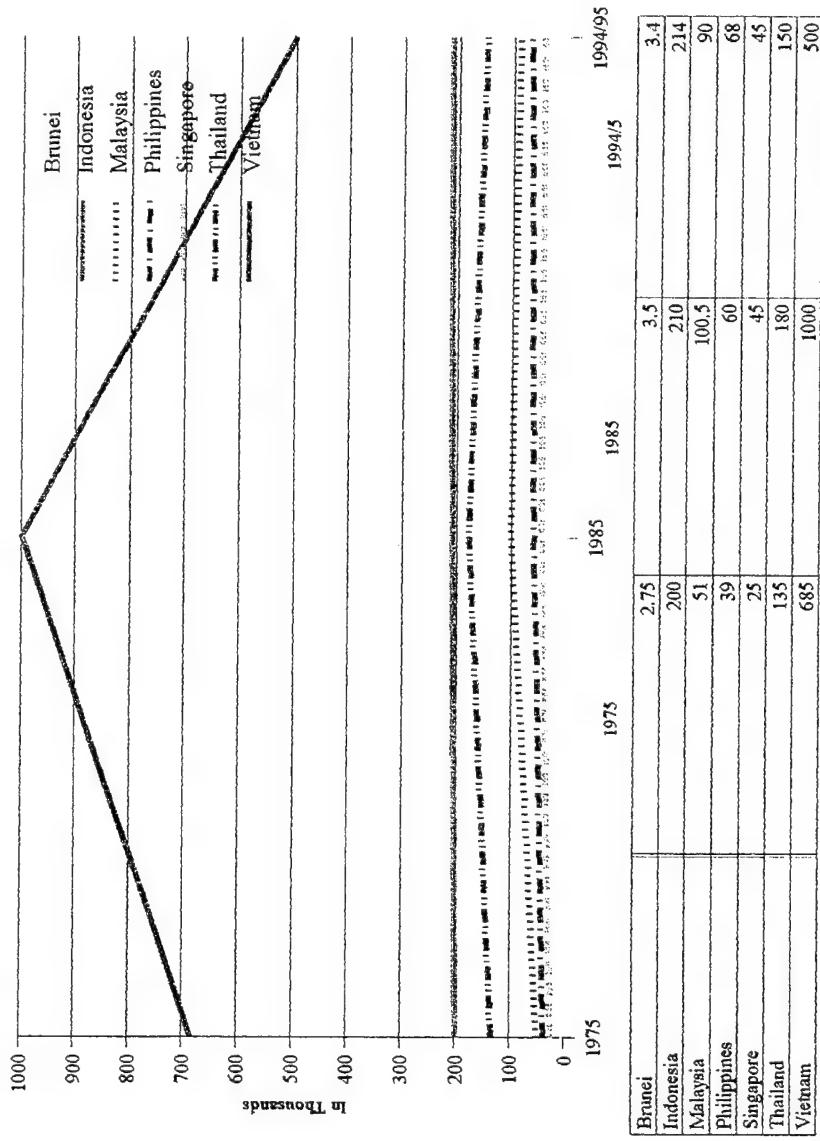
**Figure 3** - Army Personnel Strength 1994 Comparisons [from United States General Accounting Office Report to Congressional Committees. National Security - Impact of China's Military Modernization in the Pacific Region (June 1995) 34-35.]

Appendix A - Southeast Asia Military Statistics



**Figure 3 - Military Equipment Statistics, 1994** [from United States General Accounting Office Report to Congressional Committees. National Security - Impact of China's Military Modernization in the Pacific Region (June 1995) 34-35.]

## Appendix A - Southeast Asia Military Statistics



**Figure 4 - Army Personnel Strengths (in thousands), 1975-1995** [from Brian Cloughley, "ASEAN at Arms - A Defense Profile," *International Defense Review* 28 (December 1995) 24.]

Appendix A - Southeast Asia Military Statistics

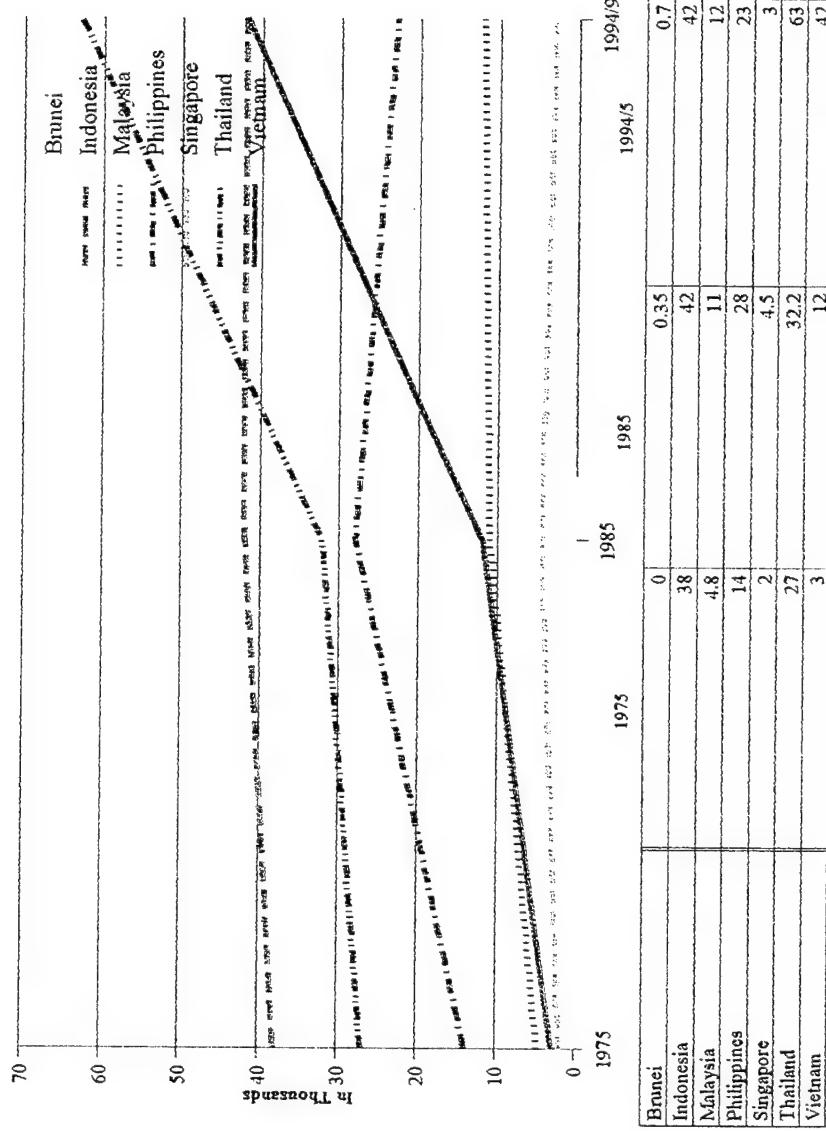
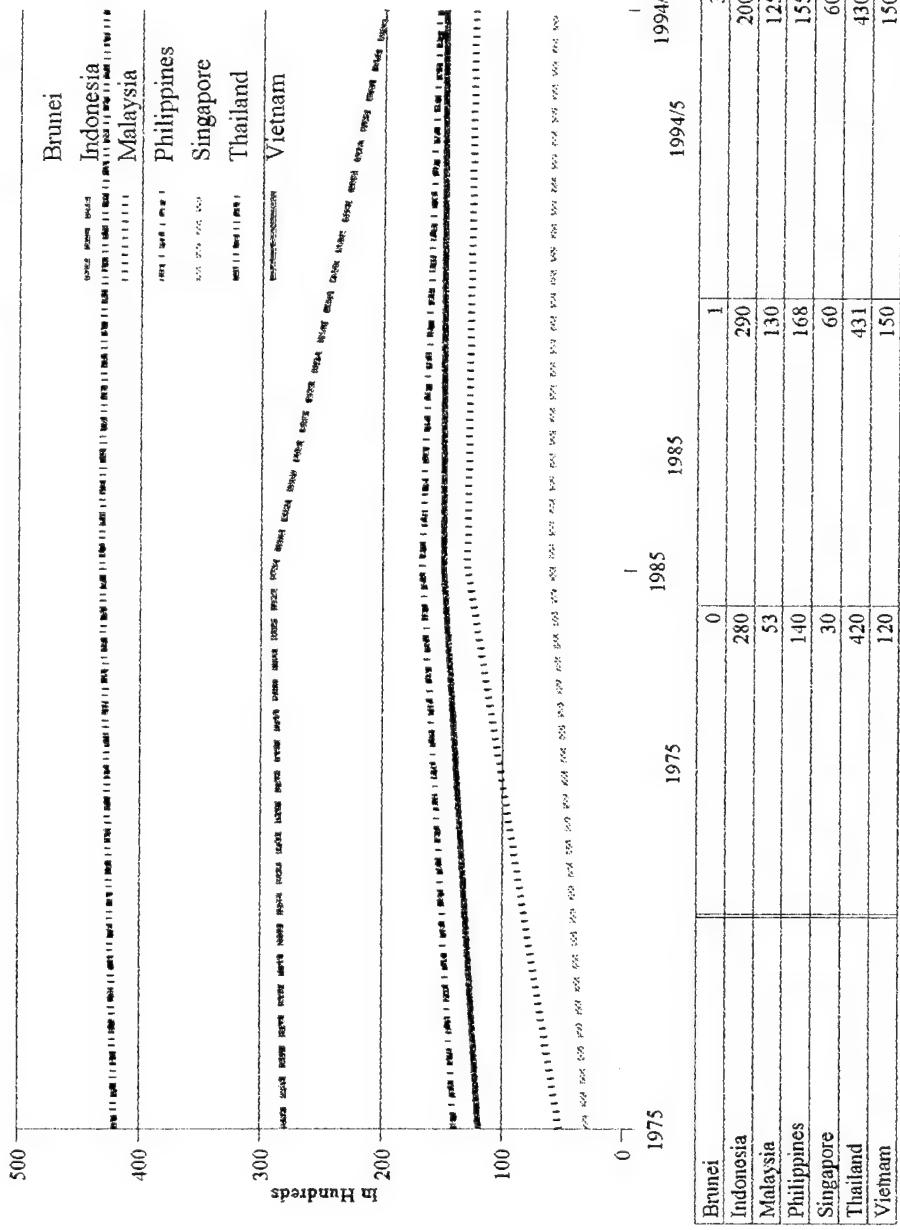


Figure 5 - Navy Personnel Strengths (in thousands), 1975-1995 [from Brian Cloughley, "ASEAN at Arms - A Defense Profile," International Defense Review 28 (December 1995) 24.]

## Appendix A - Southeast Asia Military Statistics



**Figure 6 - Air Force Personnel Strengths (in hundreds), 1975-1995 [from Brian Cloughley, "ASEAN at Arms - A Defense Profile," International Defense Review 28 (December 1995) 24.]**

Appendix A - Southeast Asia Military Statistics

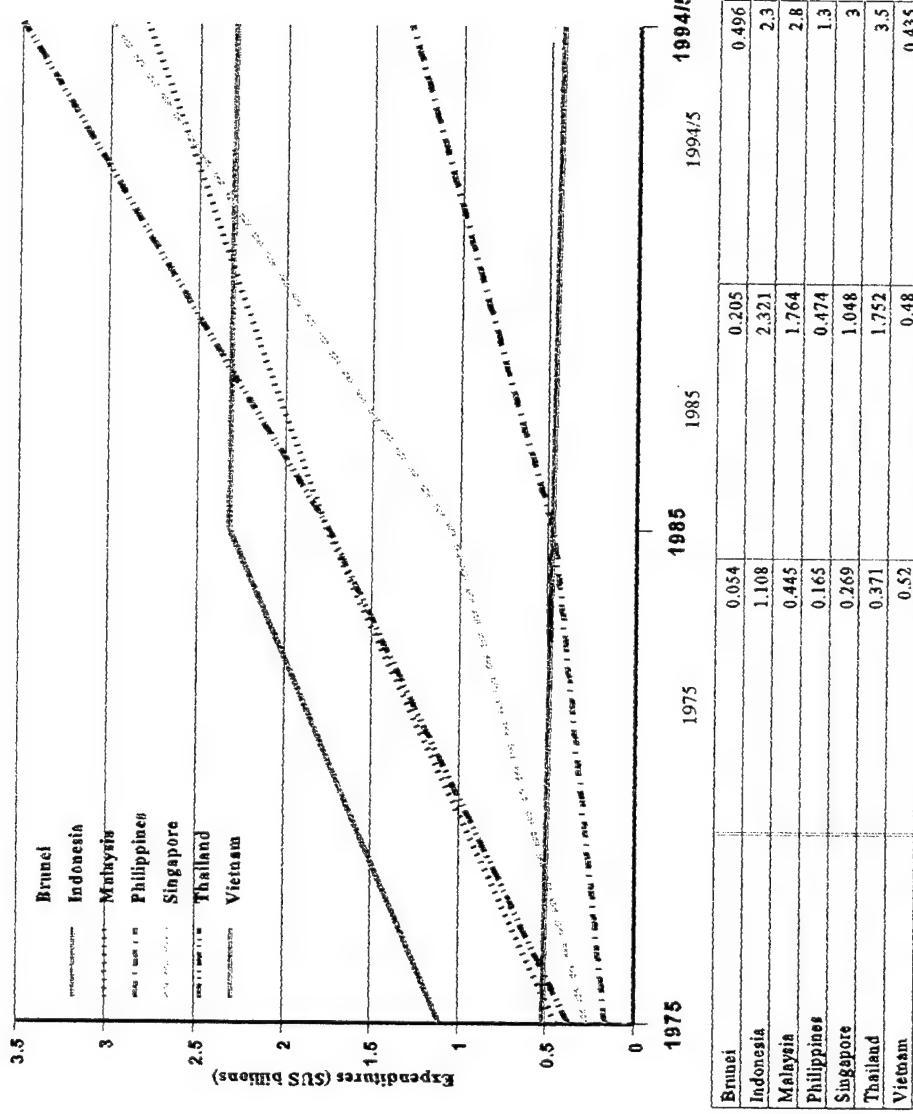


Figure 7 - ASEAN military expenditures (in billions of U.S. dollars), 1975-1995 [from Brian Cloughley, "ASEAN at Arms - A Defense Profile," International Defense Review 28 (December 1995), 24.]

## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

*Adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly  
of the United Nations on the tenth day of December 1948*

### FINAL AUTHORIZED TEXT

#### PREAMBLE

WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

WHEREAS disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.

WHEREAS it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

WHEREAS it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

WHEREAS the people of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

WHEREAS Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

WHEREAS a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realisation of this pledge,

## Appendix B - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

NOW THEREFORE

# THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*proclaims*

THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

ARTICLE 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

ARTICLE 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

ARTICLE 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

ARTICLE 4: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

ARTICLE 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 6: Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

ARTICLE 7: All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

ARTICLE 8: Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

## Appendix B - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

ARTICLE 9: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

ARTICLE 10: Everyone is entitled in full equality to fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

### ARTICLE 11:

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

ARTICLE 12: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

### ARTICLE 13:

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

### ARTICLE 14:

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

### ARTICLE 15:

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

### ARTICLE 16:

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitations due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and its dissolution.

## Appendix B - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

### ARTICLE 17:

- (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

ARTICLE 18: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

ARTICLE 19: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

### ARTICLE 20:

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

### ARTICLE 21:

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly, or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

ARTICLE 22: Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

### ARTICLE 23:

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

## Appendix B - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration insuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

**ARTICLE 24:** Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

### ARTICLE 25:

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

### ARTICLE 26:

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

### ARTICLE 27:

(1) Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

**ARTICLE 28:** Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realised.

### ARTICLE 29:

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which along the free and full development of his personality is possible.

## Appendix B - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 30: Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

## **GLOSSARY**

In America Recommitted [Donald E. Nuechterlein, America Recommitted - United States National Interests in a Restructured World (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 18-21.], Donald Nuechterlein defines intensities of national interest as follows:

**Major:** An issue "that a country considers to be important but not crucial to its well-being." They are negotiable rather than confrontational issues.

**Peripheral:** An issue "that does not seriously affect the well-being of the United States as a whole, even though it may be detrimental to the private interests of Americans conducting business abroad."

**Survival:** "Imminent, credible threat of massive destruction to the homeland if an enemy's demands are not countered quickly."

**Vital:** "Threats to a country's vital interests are potential, even probable, but not imminent dangers. . . . An issue is so important to a nation's well-being that its leadership refuses to compromise beyond the point that it considers intolerable."

The following extract comes from a statement the White House Office of the Press Secretary released the statement on July 11, 1995 [Department of State. "Fact Sheet: U.S. Vietnam Economic Relationships," Dispatch 6, no. 28 (July 10, 1995): 553-554.]. It clarifies economic trade criteria and programs involving U.S. trade with other nations, in general, and Vietnam specifically.

**Export-Import Bank:** "General human rights restrictions ordinarily do not apply to EXIM loans or guarantees. A country's human rights performance, by definition a 'non-financial or non-commercial consideration,' may be a basis for denying EXIM loans or guarantees only if the President determines that a denial for such reasons would be in the national interest 'where such action would clearly and importantly advance United States policy in such areas as . . . human rights.'

'EXIM is prohibited from providing loans or other credits to 'Marxists-Leninist' countries, and Vietnam is deemed to be Marxist-Leninist for purposes of the provision. The President may determine that provision of financing is in the 'national interest' and waive the prohibition on a case-by-case or country basis [12 U.S.C. Section 635(b)(1)(H)(iv)(2)]. EXIM programs are also subject to Jackson-Vanik.' (pages 553-554)

**Generalized System of Preferences:** “Section 502(b)(7) of the Trade Act conditions eligibility for designation as a ‘beneficiary developing country’ for purposes of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) upon a number of factors, including a country’s respect for ‘internationally recognized workers rights,’ as that term is defined in Section 502(a)(4) of that Act. Under this section, ‘internationally recognized workers rights’ include (I) the right of association, (ii) the right to organize and bargain collectively, (iii) a prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor, (iv) a minimum age for the employment of children, and (v) acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health.” (page 553)

**Most-Favored-Nation Status:** “In order to receive MFN, a bilateral commercial agreement with Vietnam which meets the requirements set forth in the Trade Act must be negotiated and approved by both houses of Congress. In addition, pursuant to Jackson-Vanik, the President must either issue a finding that Vietnam allows free and open emigration, or issue an annual waiver of that requirement if he determines that such waiver will substantially promote the objectives of the law and if he has received assurances that Vietnamese emigration practices will henceforth lead substantially to the achievement of those objectives.” (page 553)

**Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC):** “Under section 231A of the Foreign Assistance Act, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) may insure, reinsure, guarantee, or finance a project only if the host government is taking steps to adopt and implement laws to extend internationally recognized worker rights as defined in Section 502(a)(4) of the Trade Act of 1974. The President may waive this requirement if he determines it is in the national economic interest to do so. OPIC programs are subject to Jackson-Vanik.”

‘Two additional provisions of the Foreign Assistance Act apply to OPIC: Sec. 115, which prohibits assistance to countries which engage in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, and Sec. 620(f), which prohibits assistance to Communist countries (subject to a national interest waiver.” (page 554)

The following extracts come from U.S.-Vietnam Trade Councils booklet entitled, U.S.-Vietnam Economic Normalization: Charting the Next Steps [Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy. U.S.-Vietnam Economic Normalization: Charting the Next Steps (Washington, D.C., October 1995)].

**U.S. Agency for International Development (AID):** AID “provides another avenue for funding projects in developing countries in order to ‘help developing countries help themselves.’ AID is authorized ‘to administer—normally on a bilateral basis—two kinds of foreign assistance: Development assistance and economic support funds.’ To date, AID has utilized NGOs to provide humanitarian assistance to Vietnam. It has been able to do so because its authorizing statute permits humanitarian assistance ‘notwithstanding’ other legislative prohibitions.” (page 6)

**U.S. Trade and Development Agency:** “TDA funds feasibility studies, training programs and other activities to promote U.S. exports and assist the economic growth of the developing countries. TDA programs can be extended to Vietnam simply by the Secretary of State issuing a determination that Vietnam is ‘friendly’ for the purposes of the program.” (pages 5-6)

## **ENDNOTES**

1. William Clinton, President of the United States. "U.S. Normalizes Diplomatic Relations with Vietnam," Statement released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, D.C., July 11, 1995. Dispatch 6, no. 28 (July 10, 1995): 551.
2. Robert D. Blackwill. "A Taxonomy for Defining U.S. National Security Interests in the 1990s and Beyond," Europe in Global Change. Edited by Verner Veidenfeld and Josef Janning (Gutersloh, Germany: Berpelnenn, 1993), 103.
3. Ambassador Peter Tomsen, "U.S./Vietnam Relations," fax to the author January 25, 1996.
4. The White House. A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, (February 1995): I.
5. The members of ASEAN are Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
6. Remarks by H. E. Nguyen Dinh Bin, Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister of the SRV at the International Conference on the Security Implications of the Conflict in the South China Sea: Prospects from Asia and the Pacific. "Security Implications of Conflict in the South China Sea: A Vietnamese Perspective," (Mandaluyong, Philippines, November 12-14, 1995), 3.
7. Panitan Wattanayogorn and Desmond Ball. "A Regional Arms Race?," The Journal of Strategic Studies 18, no. 3 (September 1995): 163.
8. Paul Peyton, Colonel, United States Army, Director of Asian Studies, United States Army War College. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College) Interview April 3, 1996.
9. U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, 6.
10. 1951 Manila Mutual Defense Treaty and the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act.
11. Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. "The United States and the Security of Taiwan," Dispatch 7, no. 6 (February 5, 1996): 31.
12. Mark J. Valencia. "China and the South China Sea Disputes," Adelphi Paper - 298 (October 1995) 44.
13. Warren Christopher. "U.S.-Vietnam Relations: A New Chapter," Address by Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the Youth of Vietnam, Institute of International

Relations, Hanoi, Vietnam (gopher://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/1D-1%3a7013%3aa1995) (August 6, 1995), 4.

14. Mohamed Jawhar, "Southeast Asia and the Major Powers," The Pacific Review 8, no. 3 (1995), 512.
15. Ngo Quang Xuan. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the United Nations. 20 Waterside Plaza, New York City, NY. Interview, March 4, 1996.
16. U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, 21.
17. Ngo Quang Xuan. "Statement by the Head of the Delegation of Vietnam to the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," (April 25, 1995), 3.
18. "Par for the Course," The Economist 337, no. 7945 (December 16, 1995): 31.
19. "Start Me Up," Indochina Digest VIII (December 8, 1995): 2.
20. Xuan. "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," 3.
21. *Ibid.*, 4.
22. Ngo Quang Xuan. Interview, March 4, 1996.
23. Admiral Richard C. Macke, CINCPAC. "Asia-Pacific Regional Security: Toward 2001," Defense Issues 9 no. 78 (Washington, D.C.): 3.
24. Denny Roy. "Assessing the Asia-Pacific 'Power Vacuum,'" Survival 37, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 53.
25. Remarks by Ambassador Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. U.S./Vietnam Trade Council, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 83.
26. David Bachman. "To Influence China," The National Bureau of Asian Research - Analysis 5, no. 1 (July 1994): 59.
27. Roy. "Assessing the Asia-Pacific 'Power Vacuum,'" 53.
28. The ARF incorporates the members of ASEAN, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the United States, the European Union, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Laos and Cambodia. China and Russia are special invitees.

29. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Fact Sheet: ASEAN (Washington, D.C., July 27, 1995), 2.
30. Henry Kissinger. Diplomacy. (New York, 1994), 827.
31. Valencia. "China and the South China Sea Disputes," 3.
32. *Ibid.*, 7.
33. *Ibid.*, 33.
34. Current U.S. policy on the Spratly Island is as follows: (1) the United States urges peaceful settlement of the issue . . . in a manner that enhances regional peace, prosperity and security, (2) it strongly opposes the threat or use of military force to assert any nation's claim to South China Sea territories and would view any such use as a serious matter, (3) it takes no position on the legal merits of competing sovereignty claims and is willing to help in the peaceful resolution of the competing claims if requested by the parties, and (4) it has a strategic interest in maintaining maritime lines of communication in the region and considers it essential to resist any maritime claims beyond those permitted by the UNCLOS. (Mark J. Valencia. "China and the South China Sea Disputes," Adelphi Paper - 298 [October 1995], 25).
35. General Accounting Office Report to Congressional Committees. National Security - Impact of China's Military Modernization in the Pacific Region (June 1995), 19-27.
36. Warren Christopher. "U.S.-Vietnam Relations: A New Chapter," Address by Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the Youth of Vietnam, Institute of International Relations, Hanoi, Vietnam (gopher://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/1D-1%3a7013%3aa1995) (August 6, 1995), 4.
37. Robert Gelbard, Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. "Briefing on Southeast Asia." (gopher://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/1D-1%3a7013%3aa1995) (June 20, 1995), 1.
38. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. International Narcotic Control Strategy Report (March 1996), 1.
39. *Ibid.*, 2.
40. *Ibid.*
41. International Narcotic Control Strategy Report (March 1996), 3.
42. Remarks by Ms Joan Spero, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs. U.S./Vietnam Trade Council, U.S. - Vietnam Economic

Normalization: The Steps Ahead, October 5, 1995, A Conference by The U.S. - Vietnam Forum. (Washington, D.C.), 19.

43. Remarks by Ms Charlene Barshefsky, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative. U.S/Vietnam Trade Council, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization: The Steps Ahead, October 5, 1995, A Conference by The U.S. - Vietnam Forum. (Washington, D.C.), 43-44.
44. Remarks by Minister Nguyen Man Cam, SRV Foreign Minister. U.S./Vietnam Trade Council, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization: The Steps Ahead, October 5, 1995, A Conference by The U.S. - Vietnam Forum. (Washington, D.C.), 12.
45. Spero, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 18.
46. William D. Coplin and Michael K. O'Leary, ed., Political Risk Yearbook 1995 (East Syracuse, NY: Political Risk Services, October 1, 1994), H-3 - H-5.
47. Spero, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 20.
48. Remarks by SRV Minister of Trade, Le Van Triet. U.S./Vietnam Trade Council, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization: The Steps Ahead, October 5, 1995, A Conference by The U.S. - Vietnam Forum. (Washington, D.C.), 36.
49. Spero, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 21-22.
50. Barshefsky, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 44.
51. Spero, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 21.
52. Triet. U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 36.
53. Thomas R. Stauch. "The United States and Vietnam: Overcoming the Past and Investing in the Future," The International Lawyer (Winter 1994), 1028.
54. Spero, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 20.
55. Stauch. "The United States and Vietnam: Overcoming the Past," 1025.
56. Ibid., 21-22.
57. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs. Background Notes - Vietnam (August 1995), 1.
58. See Glossary for a discussion of various trade programs and the criteria the U.S. uses to grant them.

59. Spero, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 22.
60. APEC includes Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, Chile, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the U.S.
61. PECC includes the APEC membership plus Columbia, Russia, and Vietnam.
62. U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, 32.
63. Stauch. "The United States and Vietnam: Overcoming the Past," 1035.
64. U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, 31.
65. Lord, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 87.
66. U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, 20.
67. "Naval Forces & the Control of Piracy in Southeast Asia," Naval Forces XVI, no. VI (June 1995): 58.
68. Ibid., 60.
69. Ibid.
70. Christopher. "U.S.-Vietnam Relations: A New Chapter," 4.
71. *do moi* - renovation. This term refers to Vietnam's conversion to a market economy.
72. "World Bank Report," Indochina Digest VII (November 17, 1995): 2.
73. The White House. A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (February 1995), 2.
74. Noel M. Morada. "ASEAN Vietnam Relations," PacNet 15 (May 3, 1994): 2.
75. Xuan. Interview, March 4, 1996.
76. Christopher. "U.S.-Vietnam Relations: A New Chapter," 2.
77. Department of Defense, Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Office. Defense POW/MIA Weekly Update (March 29, 1996).
78. Department of Defense, A Zero-Based Comprehensive Review of Cases involving [sic] Unaccounted for Americans in Southeast Asia, (November 13, 1995), 6.

79. The author was the Commander, Detachment 2, Joint Task Force - Full Accounting, Hanoi, Vietnam from June 1994 until June 1995. The Detachment is responsible for coordinating all U.S. Department of Defense efforts in Vietnam to achieve the fullest possible accounting for Americans still unaccounted-for as a result of the war in Indochina. The conclusions presented here are as a result of firsthand observation of Vietnamese efforts from the peasants assisting field operations to statements by Vietnam's President, Prime Minister, and Secretary General of the Communist Party.

80. Remarks by Senator Bennett Johnston, U.S./Vietnam Trade Council, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization: The Steps Ahead, October 5, 1995, A Conference by The U.S. - Vietnam Forum. (Washington, D.C.), 49.

81. Lord, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 82.

82. See Appendix B for a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

83. Department of State. Vietnam Human Rights Practices, 1995 (Washington, D.C., March 1996), 1.

84. Ibid., 2.

85. Lord, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 83.

86. Morada, "ASEAN Vietnam Relations," 2.

87. Warren Christopher. "Remarks by the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the Seven-Plus-One Session of the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference," (gopher://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/1D-1%3a7013%3aa1995) (August 2, 1995), 3.

88. Department of State, Fact Sheet: ASEAN, 2.

89. Panitan Wattanayogorn and Desmond Ball. "A Regional Arms Race?," The Journal of Strategic Studies 18, no. 3 (September 1995): 169.

90. PACOM's current strategy of engagement emphasizes "places not bases." It de-emphasizes the need to base forces in Asia as the U.S. did at Subic Bay, and Clark Air Base and stresses programs such as "high level visits, defense attache activities, military sales, military-to-military contact programs, exchange and training programs, multilateral seminars and conferences, exercises, small unit exchanges, humanitarian and civic assistance, port calls, band visits and staff talks." [Quotation from United States Pacific Command, "Managing USPACOM Strategy of Engagement," (undated).]

91. Christopher. "U.S.-Vietnam Relations: A New Chapter," 4.

92. Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy. U.S.-Vietnam Economic Normalization: Charting the Next Steps, U.S. - Vietnam Economic Normalization, 4.
93. Ibid., 5.
94. Richburg, Keith B. "U.S.-Vietnam Ties Turn Out Knotty," Washington Post (January 30, 1996), A10.
95. Ambassador Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. "U.S.-Vietnam POW/MIA Progress: Lifting the Embargo," Dispatch 5, no. 9 (February 28, 1994): 109.
96. Vietnam Human Rights Practices, 1995 , 1.
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